



County of Fresno
CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUPERVISOR BOB WATERSTON-DISTRICT 5

November 25, 2002

Dear Constituent:

I hope this letter finds you and your family doing well and enjoying the beautiful autumn season of our glorious foothills and mountain communities. I want to take this opportunity to check in with you and let you know that I hold office hours every six weeks at the Auberry Sheriff's Substation. Please contact my assistant, Kathy, at 488-3665 for the dates and times. Please drop by to let me know your thoughts and concerns about issues affecting all of us living here in District 5.

As your Supervisor and Board Chairman, I am proud to represent your area. Many of your beautiful attractions are featured in our 2002 State of the County video. Please let me know if you would like to see this video which was shown to Fresno County business leaders during the recent State of the County Breakfast.

I would also like to provide you with information on some upcoming issues of importance for local residents. This letter is not an endorsement of either of these issues, but an educational piece for you to have more information at hand to decide if you would like to support these proposals.

The first issue is the availability of grant dollars for a community park in Prather. Thanks to the efforts of members of your community, the Board of Supervisors approved approximately \$1.5 million in matching grant dollars for construction of a community park on 15 acres of land to be donated by the Sierra Unified School District. This is a one-time opportunity for a community improvement that will probably not happen again in the foreseeable future. The proposed budget for your park is \$2.3 million. I will commit to getting the remaining \$800,000 from the \$2.9 million allocated to Fresno County from Proposition 40 Per Capita Grant Program. Even though Fresno County has grant dollars from the State to build the park, we do not have funds for routine operations and on-going maintenance.

The second issue is the Auberry Volunteer Fire Department. This volunteer organization provides fire protection and emergency services to the Auberry area with donations of less than \$19,000 annually. The services will soon be unavailable to you due to lack of funds. The result will be much higher fire insurance premiums and NO local fire and emergency services.

Members of your community are looking at the formation of a County Service Area to provide services through a benefit assessment on property within the proposed district (special tax district) to fund the necessary fire protection and park maintenance. The formation process is very expensive. Proposition 218 (Article XIID of the State Constitution) requires that an "Engineer's Report" supporting the benefit assessment or assessments be done. If there is sufficient support from the community to proceed with the formation process, the Local Area Formation Commission, Board of Supervisors and a majority of property owners must approve the special tax district. Then each property owner within the district must be mailed a ballot to vote for or against the assessment(s) and a notice of public hearings to be conducted by the Board of Supervisors must be posted.

Even though there has been a significant effort in community outreach on these two issues, the purpose of this letter and the enclosed fact sheets and response cards is to survey every property owner before the formation process begins. The question I place before you is whether you are willing to support a special tax assessment on real property for the proposed Sierra Foothill Community Park and/or the Auberry Volunteer Fire Department.

The community groups have proposed formation of one County Service Area with two zones. Zone A represents the Community Park service area. Zone B represents the Auberry Volunteer Fire Department service area. You will note that Zone B overlaps Zone A. If formed, each proposed Zone would be independent of each other in both operation and funding. On the back of each fact sheet is a map showing each Zone. If you have property in Zone A, you will receive one GREEN response card. If you have property in both Zones A and B you will receive two response cards, one GREEN and one RED. Please complete your response card(s), stamp and mail within two weeks.

Again, this is only a survey, not an official ballot, to determine if your community supports either or both of these issues.

You may access a map of the area in question and other useful information on Fresno County's website at www.fresno.ca.gov: click on Bob Waterston for District 5 information. You can also call Ron Eldridge at 855-4084 or Gayle Hays at 855-6540 for questions regarding the fire issue or Kirby Molen at 855-2215 or Barbara Ferguson at 855-2125 regarding the proposed park.

Thank you for your attention to these important community matters. I hope to see you during my office hours. Should you need to speak with me on other District 5 matters, please feel free to contact me through my website: www.bobwaterston.net, or you may call me at 488-3665. I wish you and your families a safe and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,



Bob Waterston
District 5 Supervisor